



California Department of Veterans Affairs

NEWS FOR VETERANS

Contact: Robert Glazier
Jerry Jones
Jaime Arteaga
Legislation and Public Affairs
916-653-2192
Fax 916-653-2611
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A FAMILY THANKS THE VETERANS HOMES OF CALIFORNIA

This email was received by Diane Domino, Executive Secretary, CDVA Veterans Homes Division in response to an inquiry from a sewing club which had made afghans to donate to worthy causes. Diane directed them to the Veterans Home of California in Barstow.

Dear Diane,

Thank you for linking us up with the Veterans Home in Barstow! What a nice time we had yesterday on our visit! My children and I went and took the afghans. Hortensia (Administrative Assistant) was so nice, and grateful!! Just about the time we were going to leave, the director (I think his name was Louis {Koff}) came out and met with us. He even took us on a personalized tour to meet some of the residents and see the facility - we even saw the "mess hall!!" What a nice facility you have there!! That was sure a creative idea to have a sundial made out of a Howitzer barrel! The children enjoyed the tank out front. They looked it all over.

The Hearn Family

PLEASE AVOID SENDING OUR TROOPS STATIONED OVERSEAS PET FLEA COLLARS

A message from Barbara Pittman, Veteran Benefits Special Assistant, Executive Office of the Mayor, Government of the District of Columbia

Dear Service Officers and Others:

Once again, well-meaning, generous Americans are thinking about service members serving away from home and are looking at ways to help. Sadly, one of these methods promotes collecting pet flea and tick collars that will be added to "care packages." Once again, we're asking for your help to get word out to stop the practice.

Most recently, we were made aware of a service organization effort to gather the collars. In addition to pet flea and tick collars, the organization was encouraging local farmers to donate ear tags normally used with horses and cattle. While the idea to use the ear tags is new and appears to be limited to that particular local area, we continue see media reports encouraging the sending pet flea and tick collars. As you'll recall, some Gulf War veterans used the pet flea and tick collars during the 1991 Gulf War and suffered acute adverse health effects.

Last year during the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Armed Forces Pest Management Board alerted the Central Command Surgeon General of similar public activities and advised that wearing the flea and tick collars is a dangerous practice, which is harmful to the wearer and in violation of established federal laws. I've attached a copy of that memorandum for your reference.

Please let your respective posts, departments and subordinate offices know that flea collars are NOT recommended for human use. There are so many other ways that concerned citizens can help service members and their families. You are doing so much already—perhaps this is yet another opportunity to refocus this desire to support.

Our office's Environmental Exposure report on pesticide use in the Gulf War provided specific information about the health effects of pet collars. The URL for that section is:

http://www.gulflink.osd.mil/pesto/pest_s04.htm#4.

Barbara A. Pittman

barbara.pittman@dc.gov

Government of the District of Columbia

Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM)

Veteran Benefits Special Assistant

441 4th Street NW Suite 570 South

Washington DC 20001

Phone: (202) 724-5454

Fax: (202) 724-7117

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